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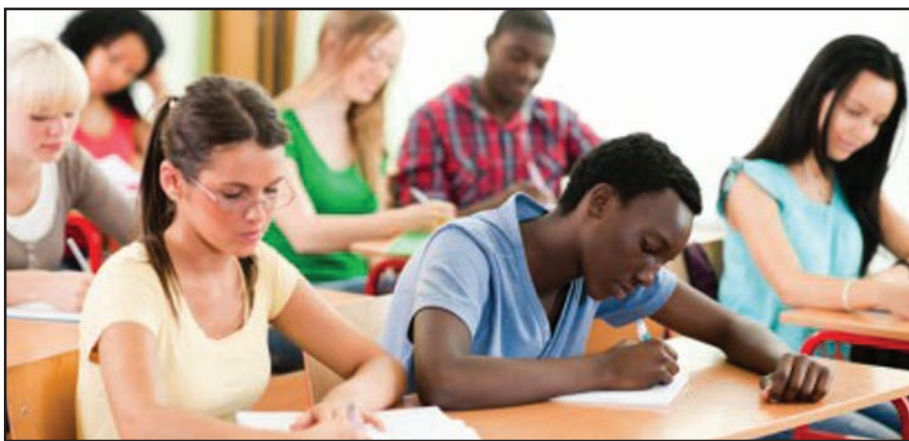
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## Compulsory education law takes effect



Last year Aruba's Parliament approved the law requiring all children to attend school. After approving this obligatory education law and insti-

tuting the Bureau to officially manage and implement this law, the Minister of Education has been working on introducing the law in phases.

Last Monday, the Minister together with General Education Inspector, John Hessen and civil servants of the new Bureau, Gwendolyn Kasta-blank-Tromp and Julisa Tromp announced that the new obligatory education law is now officially in effect on Aruba.

This means that all children ages 4 to 16 MUST attend school. The responsibility for ensuring that children are officially enrolled and attending school is the parents or guardian.

Each child is obligated to be in school up and until he/she is 17 years of age, or until they have graduated from a secondary school. The

government has begun implementing this law in different phases. Government officials have visited most of our schools and have communicated the rules of the new law to school masters. The next

phase is for the schools to inform parents of the law and how they must comply.

Parents are required to inform the school whenever a child is unable to attend classes in the event of illness or for other reasons. If a child is in need of a "dispensation from attending classes," because of travel for medical purposes or to represent Aruba internationally, the person responsible for the child, either the parent or guardian, is required to submit a formal petition to the head master of the school.

This new obligatory education law has only one primary purpose, the benefit of each child and their successful development. Hence, every parent is urged to take careful note of the law and to comply with all the regulations.

## Picasso lover portrait sells for £28.6 mn in London



LONDON (AFP) - A portrait of Picasso's lover Marie-Therese Walter sold in London on Tuesday for £28.6 million (\$45.0 million, 33.3 million euros), Sotheby's auction house said.

The colourful and curvaceous "Femme assise pres d'une fenetre" (Woman sitting by a window), painted in 1932, was sold at a crowded salesroom to an unnamed

telephone buyer, a Sotheby's spokesman said.

It had been expected to go under the hammer for between £25 million and £35 million.

Picasso met his famous muse in Paris in 1927, when she was 17 and he was 45. Their relationship was kept secret for many years because of her age and Picasso's marriage to the Russian bal-

lerina Olga Khokhlova.

The affair was revealed in 1932 when portraits of Walter were displayed for the first time alongside other works by the Spanish master in a major retrospective, and Khokhlova realised there was another woman in her husband's life.

Walter, who inspired several of Picasso's works including "La Lecture", "La Reve" and "Nature morte aux tulipes", bore the artist a daughter, Maya.

Another portrait of Walter from the same series, "Nude, Green Leaves and Bust", held the record for the most expensive work of art ever sold at auction when it was bought for \$106.4 million in New York in 2010.

It was ousted last May when "The Scream" by Edvard Munch sold for \$119.9 million.

"La Lecture" sold at Sotheby's in 2011 for £25 million, double its pre-sale estimate, while "Nature morte aux tulipes" went under the hammer in New York last November for \$41.5 million.





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## Minimum wage has been increased!



The government of Aruba has formally announced that the decree for raising the minimum wage has been made effective as of February 1st, 2013. As of this date, the official minimum wage for an employee 18 years or older is now Afls.1.636,70 per month. Per week the amount is now Afls.381,70.

For a domestic employee 18 years or older, the new minimum wage is now Afls.763,55 per month. If the domestic employee works 22 hours or less per week, the minimum wage is now Afls.8,55 per hour.

## Sabana Grandi Ballpark will soon be fully functional

The government considers sport facilities very important, hence the reason for their involvement in our barrios. In the past week the government met with Chichi Maduro-Yarzagaray and Richard De Luvio, both sport leaders in the barrio.

According to Chichi, there is no place for young people to practice sports in Sabana Grandi. She is of the opinion that like all other sports fields there should be illumination so they can practice at night, hence their request for installing lights in Sabana Grandi.

For the most part, young people here play softball but during the day as the club does not have the resources to install lights. They are concerned that there is no adequate place for children to practice sports in the barrio. According to Chichi, it is important that we concentrate on our young people so they can get what they need in the barrio.

President of the Sabana Grandi Ballpark, Richard De Luvio, wants the government's social plan to give attention to the Sabana Grandi field and to equip the field with proper illumination for our children to be able to practice their sports. Apart from the children, the 50th League and the Aruba Soft Ball Bond are also interested in playing on this field; however, without illumination and some other small details that will not be possible. By five o'clock in the afternoon, visibility becomes very poor, according to De Luvio.

Dito Acosta of the Ministry of General Affairs, who is in charge of facilities and sports events accompanied Prime Minister Eman in his tour of the facilities of Sabana Grandi and is now fully



aware of what is needed to bring the facility up to date. Among others, the Sabana Grandi facility needs a good backup and protective fence to protect the public from the arena. The arena is properly built of poured cement, blocks and lumber; which is a much more durable system than when made of metal.

The intention is to work together with the board of Sabana Grandi Ball Park to do whatever is necessary to make this sports field fully functional. The government

promised that they will provide illumination, a backstop and a tribunal.

The property around the field will be grazed to be used as parking area, the existing tribunal will be painted along with completing other necessary work in the backstop and dugout. The field will be renovated to the extent that they can accommodate little league teams and other sport tournaments. So that proper functioning of the Sabana Grandi field will soon become a reality.

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## Aura Casino: "Where players win"



Aura Casino at the Occidental Grand is the place to play right now! The cash prizes are flowing out and happy players are leaving with big smiles on their faces.

Recently, Mrs. Vivian Petropoulos was one of those happy winners. Mrs. Petropoulos found her lucky streak in the newly renovated Aura Casino "where players win." She won a total amount of \$2,724.93 while playing on the brand new slot machine "Quick Hits."

Another happy winner was Mrs. A. Houtman, who won a total amount of \$1,849.56 at the Aura Casino while playing on the brand new slot machine "Quick Hits."

Mr. John Ryan also decided to join the winners. Mr. Ryan won the beautiful sum of \$4,000, playing the slot machine "Poker Collection."

Mr. Ryan found his lucky

streak in the newly renovated Aura Casino "where players win".

And there was another lucky winner by the name of Mrs. Barbara Graziosef.

Mrs. Graziosef won a total amount of \$1,529.25 at the Aura Casino at the Occidental Grand while playing on the brand new slot machines "Quick Hits"

Staff & Management want to congratulate all the lucky winners and invite everyone to come and win at the Aura Casino at the Occidental Grand: "Where players win."

The center of Aruba has definitely shifted here at the Aura Casino, which happens to be smack-dab in the middle of all the action on Palm Beach.

Come and try your luck, maybe you can be one of Aura Casino's next lucky winners!

## Obama unveils plans to avert budget cuts

WASHINGTON (AFP) - President Barack Obama Tuesday called for stop-gap spending curbs and tax reforms to avert multi-billion dollar budget cuts due to hammer the economy on March 1, but hit a Republican brick wall.

Obama warned the fragile economy could not afford the blow from huge cuts to defense and other government programs, known as the sequester, and the jobs of millions of Americans should not be threatened by wrangling in Washington.

The president said if Congress could not act on a bigger deficit cutting package by March 1, lawmakers should pass a smaller plan of spending cuts and tax reforms to forestall the economically damaging impact of the sequester.

"There is no reason that the jobs of thousands of

Americans who work in national security or education or clean energy, not to mention the growth of the entire economy, should be put in jeopardy," Obama told reporters.

"Let me repeat, our economy right now is headed in the right direction. It will stay that way as long as there aren't any more self-inflicted wounds coming out of Washington."

House Republican Speaker John Boehner wading into yet another tax and spending row with Obama, ruled out any compromise that involved higher taxes, after submitting for the president's call for more taxes on the rich last year.

"We believe there is a better way to reduce the deficit, but Americans do not support sacrificing real spending cuts for more tax hikes," Boehner said in a statement.

"The president's sequester

should be replaced with spending cuts and reforms that will start us on the path to balancing the budget in 10 years."

Senate Republican minority leader Mitch McConnell also warned that Americans would "not support more tax hikes in place of the meaningful spending reductions both parties already agreed to and the President signed into law."

The Congressional Budget Office reported Tuesday that if the sequester is put through, the US budget deficit will shrink sharply this year but that also economic growth will be crunched from 2012's 1.9 percent to just 1.4 percent.

"If all of the fiscal tightening still embodied in current law for 2013 was removed, growth in real GDP would be about 1.5 percentage points higher this year than CBO currently projects," the study said.

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## Children's O'stad Carnaval pics



## Sunset Grille staging a sumptuous feast with Castello Banfi wines tonight



The Romar Trading, Banfi Wine's Michela Dominici and Sunset Grille team

Lovers of fine wine and food, particularly Italian cuisine, will not want to miss a very special night in the Sunset Grille at the Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa. This collaboration between Romar Trading, exclusive agents for fine Casitillo Banfi Italian wines and the Radisson's Executive Chef Kien-Fat Lie-Kwie, will be a night to remember.

Official host for the night is Castello Banfi's Trade Hospitality Manager and Events Planner, Michela Dominici, a native of the Montalcino region Tuscany, where the famous vineyard and winery is located. She is on Aruba for a short training visit.

Ms. Dominici, a graduate of the University of Florence and a member of the Association of Italian Sommeliers, will be on hand to orchestrate this delightful repast of five courses, each perfectly paired to a select Castello Banfi wine.

Michela has been with Banfi since 1997, when the winemakers opened what many wine connoisseurs and critics consider "the most pro-

gressive, inviting and extensive tasting rooms in Europe." It is part of a complex in an authentic, landmark Etruscan fortress which houses luxury suites, two restaurants, a glass museum and the famous winery. It sits atop a mount surrounded by 7,000 acres of the finest grape-growing land in Europe. They also grow plums and olives, producing olive oil and balsamic vinegar aged 12 years, which are in great demand with gourmet chefs maintaining the highest standards.

Tonight's dinner will begin with a Trio of Bruschetta, followed by Shrimp Fra Diavolo as starters. The main courses are Veal Parmesan accompanied by fried eggplant and a Top Sirloin Butt with Fettuccini Pasta. Dessert is a Pasticcio Brittle Cheesecake with Mixed Berry Sauce.

Every course of this remarkable menu will be ac-



companied by a hand-picked vintage from the more than 25 issued by the Castello Banfi cellars. Ms. Dominici and Clive Faustin, Romar Trading's official Wine Maven, will be on hand to educate diners in the fine points of wine and food pairing. They will impart valuable knowledge in understanding and selecting vintages and appreciating the fine points of superior wines; the evening will be a feast for all the senses and intellect.

The dinner starts at 7:30 PM and costs 125 Aruban Florins per person, all inclusive. Tickets can be purchased at La Bodega Wine Cellar in Eagle or the Romar Trading headquarters on Scotlandstraat.

By Rosalie Klein



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## Shari and Duffy say “YES” to each other once again



Fast forward to January 30, 2013 and nothing would make Shari and Duffy happier than pledging their love for each other in front of their friends and relatives as they now celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

On hand for this special occasion were son Bill, daughter Susy, grandkids Nick, Allen, Sawyer and many friends they have made over the many years.

Standing in for this special occasion just as they did 10 years ago are longtime friends, Irma and Juan Kock.

Thanks to Playa Linda Beach Resort and its fine people who always provided great cooperation and managed to give these celebrations a very special meaning.

A Very special Thanks goes to Dominee Dekker who just like he did 10 years ago, once again was on hand to bless our great friends Shari and Duffy.

May they be blessed with many more happy years and many returns to their “Home away from Home”.



Shari and Henry (Duffy) Timme hail from Endeavor, Wisconsin but for the past 30 years have found their way to Aruba where they spend an average of 4 weeks among their many friends and relatives and enjoy the warm weather and the hospitality of its people.

2003 saw Shari and Duffy celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary and as the sun set on yet another wonderful day, they pledged eternal love to one another.



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## US urges Europe to act against Hezbollah

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States Tuesday pressed Europe to help choke off funds and aid to Hezbollah after Bulgaria blamed the militia group for an attack that killed five Israeli tourists in July.

"For many, many months, we've made no secret of our desire to see the EU take firmer action with regard to Hezbollah," said State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland, adding the issue had been repeatedly raised in talks.

The Lebanon-based Muslim Shiite group Hezbollah has been on a US terror blacklist since 1995 after a series of anti-American attacks, including the bombing of the US embassy and Marine barracks in Beirut in the 1980s.

However, the militia -- which is an ally of Syrian leader President Bashar al-Assad and funded by Iran -- is also the most powerful faction in Lebanon's cabinet, controlling 18 out of 30 seats, and is the country's most powerful military force.

Washington has been actively pushing the European

Union to take steps to ban Hezbollah as a terrorist organization as well.

The US fears that, as it has been "squeezing" Hezbollah, the group has looked for "other places to do their banking, to do their plotting," Nuland said.

"Our concern has been that Europe has been one of the places that they have exploited."

The bus bombing, in which five Israeli tourists and their Bulgarian driver were killed at Burgas airport, was part of "a stepped-up terrorist campaign by Hezbollah... around the world over the past year," she warned.

New Secretary of State John Kerry discussed the issue during talks Tuesday with EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton.

And President Barack Obama's top counter-terrorism advisor John Brennan, his nominee to lead the CIA, called on European states to take "proactive action" to uncover Hezbollah's infrastructure, financing and operational networks.

Brennan said the attack exposed Hezbollah as "a ter-

rorist group that is willing to recklessly attack innocent men, women, and children, and that poses a real and growing threat not only to Europe, but to the rest of the world."

But US officials praised Bulgaria for its professional and comprehensive investigation into the attack, vowing Washington would stand with the government in Sofia as it fights terrorism.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also said the European Union should draw the "necessary conclusions" about Hezbollah following the investigation, hinting the group should be placed on a terror watch list.

Nuland acknowledged however there were differences among EU states about how to deal with Hezbollah, given that it is part of an elected government.

"There are varying views about whether... there's a difference between the military wing and the political wing. You know that our view is that we don't recognize a distinction, but different governments have different views," she said.

## Gov. Cuomo wants funds to buyout superstorm Sandy homeowners



UNITED STATES, New York : NEW YORK, NY - FEBRUARY 05: A destroyed home is viewed in Oakwood Beach in Staten Island on February 5, 2013 in New York City. In a program proposed by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, New York state could spend up to \$400 million to buy out home owners whose properties were destroyed by Superstorm Sandy. The \$50.5 billion disaster relief package, which was passed by Congress last month, would be used to fund the program. If the program is adopted, homeowners would be relocated and their land would be left as a natural barrier to help absorb future floods waters. "A lot of people need that help," said Long Beach resident Tom Mannion. Homes in the Long Island oceanfront city were inundated with 6 feet or more of water during the height of October's storm. Mannion described himself as skeptical of government programs, but predicted it will be of interest to many, especially those "people whose houses are wiped out, and they had no insurance. Those people could use that help."

## Amazon virtual coin entices Kindle Fire app makers

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - Amazon unveiled a virtual currency Tuesday to enhance the potential for developers to make real money in games and other "apps" tailored for Kindle Fire tablet computers.

Amazon Coins will be introduced in the United States in May in a move aimed at inspiring the creation of more fun, hip or functional programs for its challenge to iPads and rival tablets powered by Android software.

Industry analysts maintain that the availability of apps

synchronized with people's lifestyles can be more important than slick hardware when it comes to which mobile gadgets people buy.

"Amazon Coins gives customers an easy way to spend money on developers' apps on Kindle Fire in the Amazon Appstore," said Amazon vice president of apps and games Paul Ryder.

The Seattle-based online retail titan is providing added incentive for developers by promising to give away tens of millions of dollars in Ama-

zon Coins for people to spend when the virtual currency is introduced.

Amazon coins can be used to buy applications or to pay for virtual goods or features sold inside mini-programs.

Developers get to keep 70 percent of the revenue, with Amazon getting 30 percent.

"Everyone recognizes Amazon's success in the e-commerce world -- now the Amazon Appstore has become a major player in the mobile app marketplace."

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## International News

### Embassy says German hostages in Colombia tourists

BOGOTA (AFP) - Two Germans being held hostage by the leftist ELN guerrilla group in Colombia are tourists, the German embassy said Tuesday after the rebels accused the two of being spies.

"They are retirees who were in the region as tourists," the embassy said in a statement, acknowledging that they were being held against their will.

It said the German foreign ministry had formed "a crisis management team that was in contact with all the relevant parties."

The National Liberation Army (ELN) said the Germans, whom it identified as Uwe Breur and Gunther Otto Breuer, were captured weeks ago in the Catatumbo region of northeastern Colombia near the Venezuelan border.

The rebels described them as "intelligence agents," saying they "have been unable to explain their presence in this region in the weeks since they were detained."

"To date, no group or person has lodged any kind of complaint regarding their disappearance," the ELN noted, adding that "spies are not protected under international humanitarian law."

President Juan Manuel Santos quickly called on the rebels to release the Germans, and held the ELN responsible for their safety.

Santos ridiculed the idea that the men could be spies.

"Who could possibly believe that two Germans were spying here in Colombia?" Santos asked. "That's an excuse that no one in their right mind would accept or understand."

The German embassy in Bogota initially declined to comment "out of respect for the hostages and their families," but in Tuesday's statement confirmed that two Germans were being held.

The ELN, is Colombia's second largest guerrilla group after the better-known Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

Founded four decades ago, the ELN has around 2,500 fighters and is active in northeastern Colombia.

Last month the group claimed to have kidnapped six mining company employees, including a Canadian and two Peruvians, in northern Colombia, claiming the move was aimed at defending the region's natural resources.

### British lawmakers approve gay marriage legislation

LONDON (AFP) - British lawmakers voted in favour of legislation allowing gay marriage on Tuesday despite a split in Prime Minister David Cameron's Conservative party.

Members of parliament voted by 400 to 175 to approve the draft law allowing same-sex couples to marry in England and Wales.

In a late intervention just two hours before lawmakers voted, Cameron made a televised statement to say the move was about "making our society stronger".

But Conservative opponents to the bill had spoken out angrily in the debate before the vote, arguing that they undermined marriage and could damage the party's prospects at the next general election in 2015.

There was never any doubt that the legislation would pass because it had overwhelming support from the opposition Labour Party, so the key question was how many Conservative MPs would vote against.

Early estimates put the number of Tories who voted against their leader at between 140 and 150, or around half the Conservative lawmakers in the House of Commons.

### Vatican receives 600 abuse cases a year

VATICAN CITY (AFP) - The Vatican's new chief prosecutor against clerical child abuse on Tuesday said his office was receiving around 600 new cases a year, many of them dating back to the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

Father Robert Oliver, a canon law specialist who previously worked at the archdiocese of Boston in the United States where abuse cases came to light a decade ago, was appointed in December.

Oliver, whose official title is "promoter of justice" for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, said the peak in reported cases was in 2004 with 800 denunciations.

He said he would follow the example of Pope Benedict XVI in calling for more assistance to victims of abuse and promising zero tolerance against abusers.

Oliver said three-quarters of the world's 112 national

bishops' conferences had responded to a Vatican request in 2011 to send guidelines on how to fight abuse.

"Each culture has a different way of confronting these issues and problems," Oliver said, citing the example of South Korea where he said the local culture had a taboo on discussing sexual abuse.

He said Africa was a continent with "a thousand cultures" where the issue of abuse still had to be addressed in-depth.

The Vatican has stressed five key points: helping victims, forewarning minors, training future clergy, rehabilitating abusers and working together with civil authorities.

Catholic higher-ups in many dioceses including in Ireland and the US were accused of covering up abuse for decades and simply moving alleged abusers from one parish to another.



KARACHI (AFP) - : An activist from Jamaat e Islami Pakistan holds a placard to mark Kashmir Solidarity day in Karachi on February 5, 2013. Pakistan observed Kashmir Solidarity Day on February 5, to denounce Indian rule in the disputed Himalayan region claimed in whole by both countries.

DO NOT



LITTER

### Six Spaniards raped at Acapulco resort

MEXICO CITY (AFP) - Six Spanish women tourists were raped early Monday by masked gunmen at a resort in Acapulco, Mexico, authorities said.

"There were six women who were raped," Acapulco mayor Luis Walton Aburto told a briefing.

Walton said the group of tourists was attacked outside a house in Barra Vieja, and that hooded gunmen raped the six

women who were with another seven Spaniards as well as a Mexican woman.

"We are now working on (victims' and witnesses') statements ... and looking for likely potential suspects," said Guerrero state prosecutor Martha Elva Garzon.

She said witnesses had no solid descriptions of the suspects because they were wearing masks.

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## Health & Living

# War veterans say meditation could solve PTSD

NEW YORK (AFP) - US war veterans suggested meditation to help heal the post-war mental disturbances that afflict a growing number of American soldiers, including possibly the ex-Marine who gunned down the country's most famous sniper over the weekend.

Meditation might sound an unlikely activity for men trained in killing people and blowing things up in Afghanistan and Iraq.

But Luke Jensen, a former undercover police officer who fell apart mentally on arrival in Afghanistan, said that after trying to commit suicide in front of his family, he agreed to try transcendental meditation -- and was saved.

"There's a lot of coping methods out there that are offered to our veterans. This needs to be one of them," the hefty built man said in a shaking voice at a meeting of the David Lynch Foundation, which promotes meditation for treating post-traumatic stress disorder.

Jensen said he has since taken a job in the government's Department of Veterans Affairs, helping other stressed out vets. Just two weeks ago, one of those he worked with committed suicide.

Transcendental meditation "needs to be implemented. It needs to be an option," Jensen told the panel in New York.

After years of being a little-talked about subject, PTSD is increasingly acknowledged as a mental health epidemic in the United States and one of the less easily quantifiable costs of America's wars on the other side of the world.

The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that PTSD occurs in between 11 and 20 percent of veterans from the Afghan and Iraq wars, and in



31 percent of Vietnam war veterans.

Although combat is commonly assumed to be the main cause of PTSD, simply witnessing the effects of bombings, for example, or the stress of being in a hostile country, are also blamed.

Another major source of PTSD, though less often discussed, is what the government calls military sexual trauma. Veterans Affairs figures show that 23 percent of women report sexual assault in the ranks, while more than half have experienced sexual harassment.

The most frightening result associated with PTSD is the rising number of suicides, which now run at 22 a day among military veterans, according to a government study released last week.

And the problem is no less alarming among active duty soldiers, with a record 349 killing themselves in 2012 -- more than were killed by the Taliban or other enemy in the field.

In the latest incident to highlight the violence engulfing former soldiers, an ex-Marine in Texas was accused Saturday of shooting dead another veteran who had devoted himself

to helping comrades adjust to peaceful life.

Transcendental meditation involves entering "a state of rest in many cases deeper than sleep," said Bob Roth, executive director of the David Lynch Foundation. "This allows deeply rooted stresses to be dissolved."

Retired rear admiral Richard Schneider, president of the private military institute Norwich University, said tests showed that cadets using the techniques increased focus in class and were better "emotionally prepared."

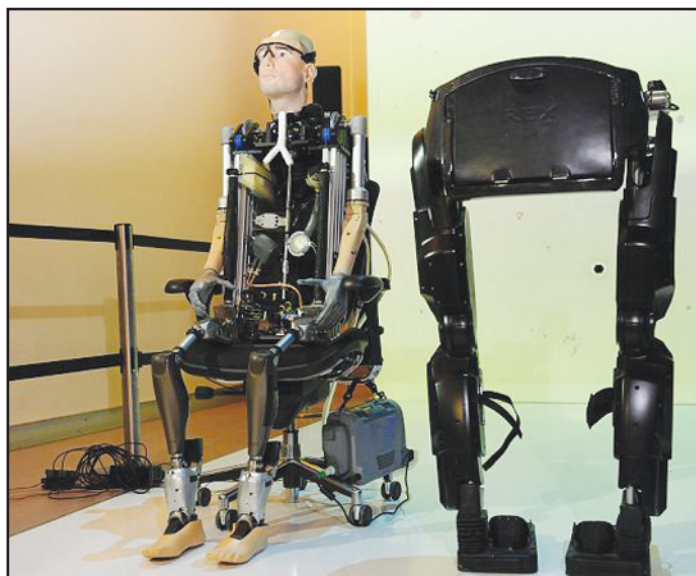
The meditation instructor, a chisel-faced air force veteran called David Zobeck, said a stigma long attached to meditation was evaporating among students, who are preparing for careers as officers.

"They're not getting the weird stares anymore," he said.

Jerry Yellin, a fighter pilot in World War II who spoke of losing comrades and making dangerous missions in the bloody Pacific theater, said he began suffering nightmares, then behavioral problems on return home at a time when PTSD was rarely discussed.

Meditating, he said, "got my life back 100 percent."

## 'Bionic man' goes on show at British museum



LONDON (AFP) - A "bionic man" costing one million dollars went on display on Tuesday at Britain's Science Museum, complete with artificial organs, synthetic blood and robot limbs. Named Rex, which is short for "Robotic Exoskeleton", the six foot six inch (two metre) humanoid with its uncannily life-like face was assembled by leading roboticists for a television programme. The creation includes key advances in prosthetic technology, as well as an artificial pancreas, kidney, spleen and trachea and a functional blood circulatory system. Welcoming Rex to the museum in London on Tuesday was Swiss social psychologist Bertolt Meyer, who was himself born without a left hand and has a sophisticated bionic replacement. The museum exhibit, which opens to the public on Thursday, will explore changing perceptions of human identity against the background of rapid progress in bionics -- although Rex is not strictly bionic as he does not include living tissue.

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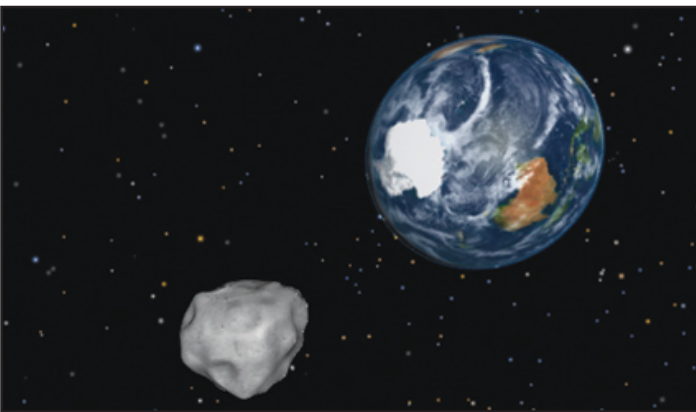
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## Sci-Tech

### Close call of Asteroid 2012-DA14 with Earth



PASADENA, Calif. - On Feb. 15 a 150-foot-wide (45 meters), the asteroid 2012 DA14 will zoom within 17,200 miles (27,700 kilometers) of our planet, coming nearer than the ring of satellites in geosynchronous orbit. While the flyby will be the closest ever known in advance for such a large asteroid, there's no reason to retreat to the doomsday bunker. NASA will hold a media teleconference on Thursday, Feb. 7, to discuss this event.



ANTARCTICA (AFP) : This handout photo released on February 4, 2013 from Shackleton Epic shows crew members bringing the vessel Alexandra Shackleton to shore at South Georgia to successfully complete leg one of their historic re-enactment, during their expedition across the Southern Ocean to Antarctica. The British-Australian expedition recreating Ernest Shackleton's perilous 1916 crossing of the Southern Ocean in a small boat got under way on January 24, 2013. Led by renowned adventurer Tim Jarvis, the team of six set off to sail 800 nautical miles in a spartan lifeboat from Elephant Island off the Antarctic Peninsula to rugged South Georgia.

### Facebook fatigue prompts breaks from network: study

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - More than half of US Facebook members have taken breaks from the leading social network, with the top reason being they are just too busy, according to a study.

About 61 percent of US users said they had taken time off from Facebook at some point, with 27 percent planning to spend less time on it in the coming year, the Pew Research Center said.

The largest group -- 21 percent -- said they had taken a break because they were too busy. Other reasons included being "tired of stupid comments," "crazy" friends, boredom, and having it cause love life problems.

Slightly more than two-thirds of adults in the United States who use the Internet belong to Facebook, according to Pew.

A fifth of those who were not Facebook members said they once belonged to the service but quit, the study said.

Reasons given for leaving included getting tired of "minding everybody else's business" and it "takes my time away."

The survey, which has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.6 percentage points, was based on telephone interviews between December 13 and 16 with 1,006 adults living in the continental United States.

### US scientists explain how owl rotates head

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US medical specialists from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore have figured out how owls can almost fully rotate their heads - by as much as 270 degrees in either direction.

The birds do so while hunting without damaging the delicate blood vessels in their necks and heads, and without cutting off blood supply to their brains.

To solve the puzzle, the team studied the bone and blood vessel structure in the heads and necks of several types of owls after their deaths from natural causes.

A contrast dye was used to enhance X-ray imaging of the birds' blood vessels, which were then meticulously dissected, drawn and scanned to allow detailed analysis.

The most striking finding came after researchers injected dye into the owls' arteries, mimicking blood flow, and manually turned the animals' heads, the study says.

Blood vessels at the base of the head, just under the jaw bone, kept getting larger and larger, turning into reservoirs as more of the dye entered the system.



This contrasted starkly with human anatomical ability, where arteries generally tend to get smaller and smaller, and do not balloon as they branch out.

Researchers believe these blood reservoirs allow owls to pool blood to meet the energy needs of their large brains and eyes, while they rotate their heads.

The supporting vascular network, with its many interconnections and adaptations, helps minimize any interruption in blood flow, the study said.

The team's findings appear in the February 1 issue of the journal Science.



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## MOMMA



## CALVIN and HOBBS



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## ACROSS

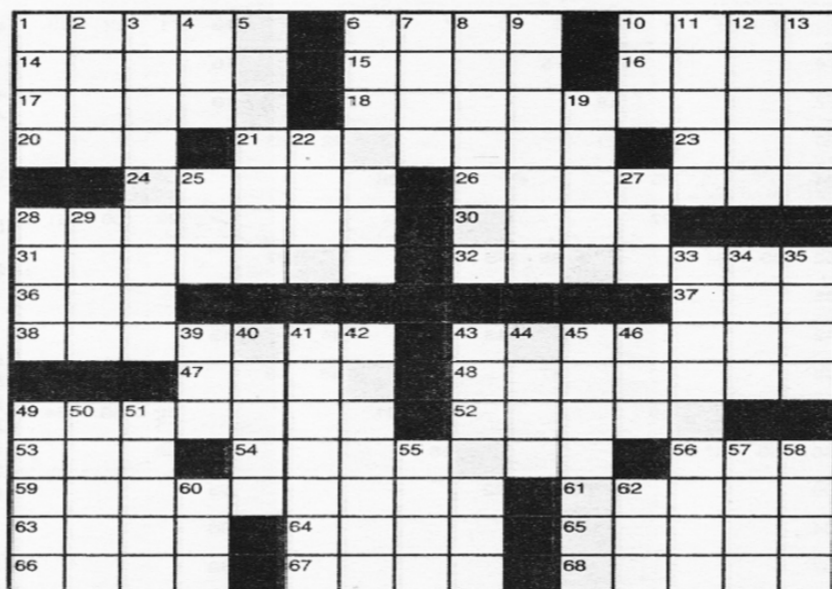
1. Lodge
6. Loafers
10. Gab
14. Fry quickly
15. Cruising
16. Musician McEntire
17. Jargon
18. They're folded by a backpacker
20. Ocean vessel inits.
21. Hung-jury result
23. Navigator's abbr.
24. "The Fishers" (Bizet)
26. Art 101 study
28. Marvel
30. Reduced calorie, on Madison Avenue
31. Confounded
32. Wall brackets for candles
36. Provocatively shy
37. "Earth Forms" sculptor
38. To such an extent
43. Where King Zog ruled
47. Furthermore
48. Argues logically
49. Fairly distributed
52. Drill again
53. Pershing's troops: abbr.
54. Quarterbacks, at times
56. Sounds of hesitation
59. Bivouacs
61. Excessive enthusiasm
63. In perpetuity

## DOWN

1. Jacob's brother
2. War god
3. Biter fighters
4. DDE's WWII command
5. Take away (from)
6. Fought
7. Sponger or schnorrer
8. Domestic servants
9. Like Rushdie's verses
10. -Magnon

11. Satchmo's greeting to Dolly
12. Letter-shaped metal bar
13. Vile
19. "Beetle Bailey" egghead
22. Author Gardner
25. one's heart out
27. Temper control number
28. 1601, to Nero
29. Get the wrinkles out
33. Tin foil?
34. -mavour-nin
35. Fancy gyms
39. Rowboat accessory
40. Jet hinges

41. "Royal Wedding" star
42. Perdue offering
43. Runs in
44. Lusty look
45. Wicket defenders
46. Bible king
49. Walked the floor
50. Break
51. "...the busy hum ..." (Milton)
55. Oracle
57. Watermelon feature
58. Back talk
60. Emulate a tabloid reporter
62. Roman salute



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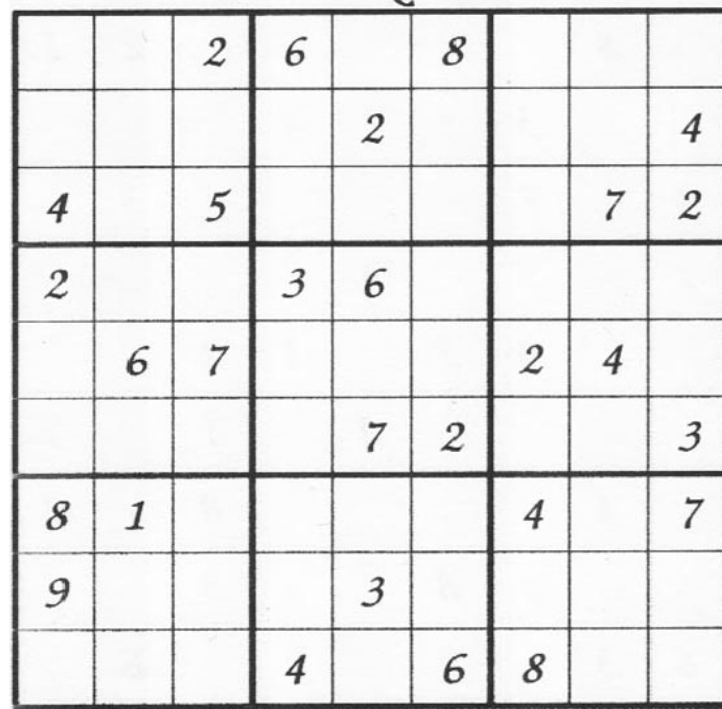
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Horacio Oduber Hospital  
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## Sudoku



SOLUTION

6	2	8	9	1	7	5	4	3
9	5	1	4	8	7	2	6	3
4	8	7	6	5	2	9	1	3
5	7	2	1	8	6	4	9	3
8	1	4	7	9	5	6	3	2
2	4	9	6	1	5	8	7	3
7	8	5	2	4	1	6	9	3
1	6	5	8	7	9	2	4	3

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9  
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.  
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



Daily Exchange Rates				
Current as of: 02/05/2013	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.77	1.79	1.80
Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	2.85
Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43	197.42
Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69	243.52
Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63	28.70
Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95	32.88
Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39	33.08
Japan	JPY	214.88	216.84	192.77
(per 10,000)				
All rates for amounts up to AWG 100,00 per item.				

## Global ecommerce sales topped \$1 tn in 2012: study

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Global Internet retail sales topped \$1 trillion for the first time in 2012 with the United States holding the top spot but China rising fast, a market research firm said Tuesday.

The report by eMarketer said ecommerce consumer sales grew 21.1 percent to just over \$1 trillion, and are expected to grow another 18.3 percent in 2013, fueled by strong growth in Asia.

The research firm said North America remained the top region for ecommerce in 2012 with \$364 billion in sales, up 13.9 percent.

But for 2013, the Asia-Pacific region is likely to be number one with 30 percent growth, which would bring the market to \$433 billion, eMarketer said.

US ecommerce sales for 2012 were estimated at \$343 billion, with Japan in second place at \$127 billion, followed by Britain (\$124 billion) and China (\$110 billion).

But China was projected to vault into second place with

65 percent growth in 2013 to \$181 billion. The US will remain the top market but growth will slow to 12 percent, for a total of \$384 billion.

"Average spending per user is lower in China -- set to reach just \$670 this year," eMarketer said in a statement. "But the sheer growth in China's digital buyers is staggering. The country will nearly double the number of people who buy goods online between 2012 and 2016."

The data used by eMarketer includes retail sales, travel sales, digital downloads purchased via any digital channel but excludes gambling and event tickets.

## Finance

### Study predicts US deficit cuts will slow growth

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US economic growth will slow to 1.4 percent in 2013, partly as a result of austerity measures dividing Washington, a study by the Congressional Budget Office released Tuesday found.

The CBO projected that the US gross domestic product will rise 1.4 percent this year, down from 1.9 percent in 2012. That is less than growth estimates of the IMF (2.1 percent) and the Federal Reserve (between 2.3 and 3.0 percent).

The CBO estimated that 2013 growth would be twice as strong without the automatic across-the-board budget cuts that go into effect March 1 unless the administration and Congress agree on an alternative.

"If all of the fiscal tightening still embodied in current law for 2013 was removed, growth in real GDP would be about 1.5 percentage points higher this year than CBO currently projects," the study said.

But, the public deficit will be two times smaller than in 2009, the peak year of President Barack Obama's economic stimulus program, and will fall to 5.3 percent of GDP by the end of fiscal 2013, which ends September 30, the study found.

For the first time since 2008, the deficit will drop below the symbolic trillion dollar mark to \$845 billion, it said.





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RENNES (AFP) - : Credit cards are pictured on a computer's keyboard on February 5, 2013 in Rennes, western France. French police has arrested, early this morning in Paris and in several French and overseas departments, 22 people in connection with the trade of credit cards numbers on internet.

## Oil prices rise on better economic prospects

NEW YORK (AFP) - Oil prices resumed their upward climb Tuesday against a backdrop of solid economic indicators.

A barrel of US benchmark West Texas Intermediate settled at \$96.64 a barrel, up 47 cents from Monday's close, on the New York Mercantile Exchange. US oil prices have gained nearly 11 percent since December 17.

The European oil benchmark, Brent futures, gained 92 cents to settle at \$116.52 a barrel.

While oil prices dropped Monday along with equity markets, the commodity jumped again Tuesday as equity markets reported new gains. Analysts attributed the rise to solid economic data in both the US and Europe.

"The market continues to be supported by the economic headlines out of the US, Europe and China, that continue to support the crude oil prices as well as the product prices," said independent analyst Andy Lipow.

Analysts pointed to a solid result in the Institute for Supply Management's January rating of the US services sector which, while lower than the December level, met expectations.

Analysts also eyed results from a European purchasing managers index, which suggested the continent was poised for a recovery. According to the data firm Markit, the indicator reached its highest level in 10 months.

"We've been seeing oil prices go up for the better part of a month" on stronger sentiment, said Gene McGillian, a broker and analyst with Tradition Energy, an over-the-counter brokerage firm.

Oil prices also received a lift due to shifts in currency valuations. The euro was up 0.6 percent compared with the dollar. When the dollar is weak, oil, which is traded in dollars, becomes more affordable for purchasers trading in other currencies.

Oil prices were also buoyed by a revival of geopolitical concerns on news that Israel is deploying a defense system in the north, said David Bouckhout, an analyst at TD Securities.

"The market is always worrying that any increase in the violence in the Middle East will lead to a supply disruption," said Lipow. "The biggest concern in the Middle East is the violence growing near the Strait of Hormuz."



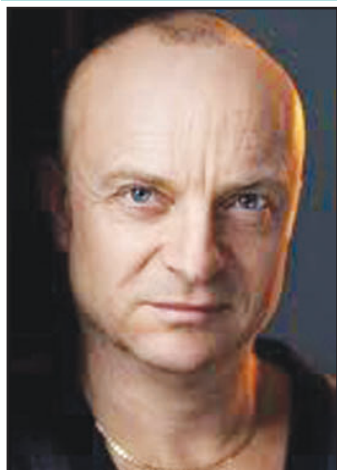
SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - Facebook-owned Instagram on Tuesday began letting a freshly launched website serve as a gallery for images taken by users of the smartphone photo-sharing service. "Instagram, at its core, is about seeing and taking photos on-the-go," company co-founder Kevin Systrom said in a blog post. Instagram.com was designed without the option of uploading images from the Internet because the service is about pictures "taken in the real world, in real time" by people on the move, according to Systrom. Features at the website, which was launched last year with Instagram members' profiles, include being able to "like" pictures and join online conversations about images. Facebook acquired Instagram last year. The original price was pegged at \$1 billion but the final value was less because of a decline in the social network's share price.

## YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

A	M	O	R		P	U	T	O	N		H	I	P
R	E	N	E		O	P	A	R	T		A	I	D
C	A	L	V	I	N	A	N	D	H	O	B	B	E
S	L	Y		L	I	N	K		B	L	E	A	T
				B	L	E	D		S	H	O	E	R
H	A	R	R	I	S		T	H	E	E		N	E
A	L	E	A	N		S	A	I	L		S	I	M
D	E	N	N	I	S	T	H	E	M	E	N	A	C
E	R	O	S		H	O	O		R	A	N	E	E
S	T	U		S	O	N	E		A	N	I	S	E
		N	A	T	T		A	V	A	L			
S	A	C	R	O		E	B	O	N		A	R	E
T	H	E	F	A	M	I	L	Y	C	I	R	C	U
E	A	R	S		A	R	I	S	E		A	R	I
S	S	S			Y	E	A	S	T		M	E	N



## Sweden crown princess hands out 'Gay of the Year' award



STOCKHOLM (AFP) - Swedish Crown Princess Victoria made headlines Tuesday after handing out the country's "Gay of the Year" award to an author whose writings about the 1980s AIDS crisis has gripped the nation.

"It's a true delight for me to be here tonight. To feel your power, your happiness and your sense of community," the princess said in a speech hailed as historic by media and gay rights activists.

The princess, 35, entered the stage to the tones of disco group ABBA's "Dancing Queen" at an awards ceremony organised by a gay magazine.

The prize was given to author and comedian Jonas Gardell, whose book and TV series "Never Dry Tears Without Gloves" has sparked a national debate on the treatment of gay men during the onset of the AIDS crisis of the 1980s.

The book's title refers to the instructions given to a nurse as she wiped tears off a dying man's face.

"Few have touched us and made us so proud as you have. Your message is clear. Straighten your back. Stretch out your hand. We will wipe each other's tears," Victoria said to the author after a surprise appearance that prompted a standing ovation at the glitzy award show.

"Victoria, you're our crown princess, but I think tonight I'm our queen," Gardell replied.

Last year's Gay of the Year title went to Sweden's first elite footballer to announce he's gay, Anton Hysen, son of former Liverpool star Glenn Hysen.

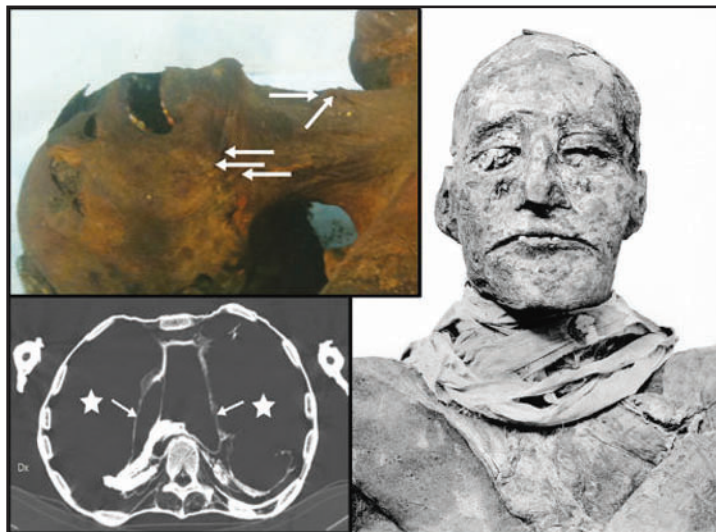
Sweden legalised gay marriage in 2009 and the Lutheran Church, which was the state church until 2000, has authorised the celebration of same sex marriages.

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## How science digs up the royal dirt (2)



**New CT scans of the pharaoh Ramses III, who ruled Egypt in the 12th century B.C., reveal that his throat was slit, probably in a coup attempt.**

PARIS (AFP) - The identification of King Richard III's skeleton is the latest coup by forensic scientists who use radiocarbon-dating, DNA analysis, 3D scanning and other hi-tech tools to unlock the secrets of the long-dead.

### Other famous cases include:

#### -- RAMSES III

Scientists said in December 2012 that an assassin had slit the throat of Egypt's last great pharaoh at the climax of a bitter succession battle.

Hieroglyphs show that the wife and son of Ramses, who ruled from 1188-1155 BC, were convicted of plotting his death.

No evidence had existed that the plan was carried out until the experts announced last year that computed tomography (CT) imaging of the mummy revealed the pharaoh's windpipe and major arteries were slashed.

#### -- NAPOLEON

For years, maverick historians in France argued that Napoleon Bonaparte had been poisoned by his English captors during his final exile on Saint Helena.

Scientist from Switzerland, Canada and the US trawled over a doctor's diagnosis of the patient and an autopsy conducted after the emperor died.

The verdict in 2007 matched that of 1821: "Boney" died of stomach cancer brought on by an ulcer.

#### -- JOAN OF ARC

Bones venerated as the remains of France's patron saint, authenticated in 1909 by a papal commission, came in fact from an Egyptian mummy and a cat, Charlier found in 2007.

He enlisted the help of two leading "noses" in the French perfume industry to help his

investigation.

They smelled hints of vanilla in the relics -- a useful tip, as the molecule vanillin is produced when a body decomposes, thus not someone who was burned.

#### --OETZI THE ICEMAN

In 1991, hikers in the Oetztal Alps in Italy's Tyrol region found the mummified remains of a man that had been extraordinarily preserved by the ice.

Since then, scientists have

microscope images of blood cells.

#### -- LOUIS XVII:

Pathologist Philippe Charlier, dubbed the "Indiana Jones of the graveyards" by French media, used genetic data in 2000 to determine that a mummified heart held in a glass urn came from the uncrowned son of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette.

The lad died in prison during the French Revolution. A



**The Iceman on display at the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology in Bolzano (South Tyrol, Italy) is one of the world's best-known and most important mummies**

uncovered that "Oetzi" lived 5,300 years ago, died at the age of about 45, was 1.60 metres (five foot, three inches) tall, weighed 50 kilos (110 pounds), had brown eyes and brown hair... and was probably allergic to milk products.

He was shot in the back with an arrow but lived for some time after his fatal wound, according to atomic

doctor removed his heart and smuggled it out of the jail in his handkerchief.

In 2000, a DNA match was found between the heart and locks of hair from Marie-Antoinette, her two sisters and DNA samples from two of the sisters' living relatives. In 2004 the heart was buried alongside the bodies of his parents.



## Eat like a local at The Queen's restaurant at Palm Beach Plaza



**Grandma's classic Stew beef with Rice and Potato salad**

An elegant décor with a breezy terrace overlooking Palm Beach welcomes guests to Varela Innocencia's very popular restaurant showcasing authentic local cuisine:

### **The Queen's.**

They may have moved from Oranjestad to hipper new digs in Palm Beach Plaza, but the food and prices are strictly native, which is what first won

this charming eatery their loyal clientele. Varela's mom, Luisa, is still in the kitchen, conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations, acknowledged on the menu with items such as "Carni Stoba di Mamachi"- "Grandma's Beef Stew," and their Arawak Steak, along with local delicacies like Keshi Yena -"Full Cheese."

This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all incased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It was very satisfying and particularly memorable paired with The Queen's garlic bread and very special Pica, a mix of chopped onions and the famous local hot pepper, Madame Janette. Not overly spicy, it lends that perfect bit of tang to this deliciously picturesque meal.

One of the distinctions of Aruban cuisine is incorporating unique indigenous ingredients such as in Wild Cucumber Stew and a particular light fish chowder accompanied by the local specialties pan bati (corn meal pancake) and funchi (the local version of polenta.)

Seafood main courses for Catch of the Day Aruban Style to shrimp and a mixed seafood platter with shrimp, fish, squid, scallops and mussels. Meat



**Varela, Luisa and the next generation of chef**

dishes such as BBQ Chicken and Ribs or Grilled Tenderloin, each including a choice of 2 side dishes; all quite yummy and bargain-priced to boot!

The Queen's is located on the second level of Palm Beach Plaza, tucked into a cozy corner at the front of the mall. If you have a mind to try the real deal in Aruban food,

without a doubt, this is the way to truly eat like a local. **They are open from 11:00 AM to 11:00 PM, daily**, offering indoor and outdoor dining. Aside from an extensive menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't forget to ask about what isn't on the menu!

## Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway; we are very pleased by



the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community

of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas, The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area and is expected to be complete by early 2013. It will also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great demand for Aruba and facili-

ties such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the

least is the future value of the investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

**Visit their website: [www.goldcoastaruba.com](http://www.goldcoastaruba.com) for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.**



## Sport

### Football: Jones and Oatway charged after touchline fracas

LONDON (AFP) - Sheffield Wednesday manager Dave Jones and Brighton first-team coach Charlie Oatway were both charged by the Football Association (FA) on Tuesday following a touchline row during the match between the two Championship clubs on Saturday.

The FA, in a statement, said the charges, "both for alleged improper conduct, are in relation to an incident which occurred during the game".

Tempers flared after Wednesday midfielder Danny Pugh's forceful challenge on Brighton's Inigo

Calderon in the second half at Hillsborough.

Pugh's ensuing booking sparked an angry reaction from the Brighton bench and the subsequent confrontation, which involved coaching staff and players from both sides, saw Jones and Oatway sent to the stands by the referee as stewards and police tried to restore order.

Wednesday won the match 3-1, a victory that inched them away from the second-tier relegation zone.

Jones and Oatway each have until 1600GMT on Friday to respond to the charges against them.

### Diego Maradona denies Italy tax fraud claims

ROME (AFP) - Argentinian football legend Diego Maradona said he was no fraudster in a video put out by his lawyer on Tuesday, as the former star disputes a claim that he owes Italian tax authorities millions of euros (dollars).

"I am not a tax fraudster. I played football and other people signed for me," Maradona, who played for Napoli, said in a video shot at his current residence in Dubai



in which he spoke Italian.

"I am not afraid of returning to Italy," he said.

"I never signed anything. The people who are really responsible are free and can walk around calmly in Naples and I can't. That's not fair," he said.

Maradona was convicted in 2005 and ordered to pay 37.2 million euros (\$50.4 million), including 23.5 million euros in interest for late payments.

But a court in November said there had been procedural errors and ordered a new investigation.

"I want to return to Italy as a gentleman because I never stole anything from anyone," Maradona said.

The player scored 115 goals in 259 matches for Napoli between 1984 and 1991.

Napoli have only won the Italian title twice -- in 1987 and 1990 -- with Maradona starring in both campaigns.

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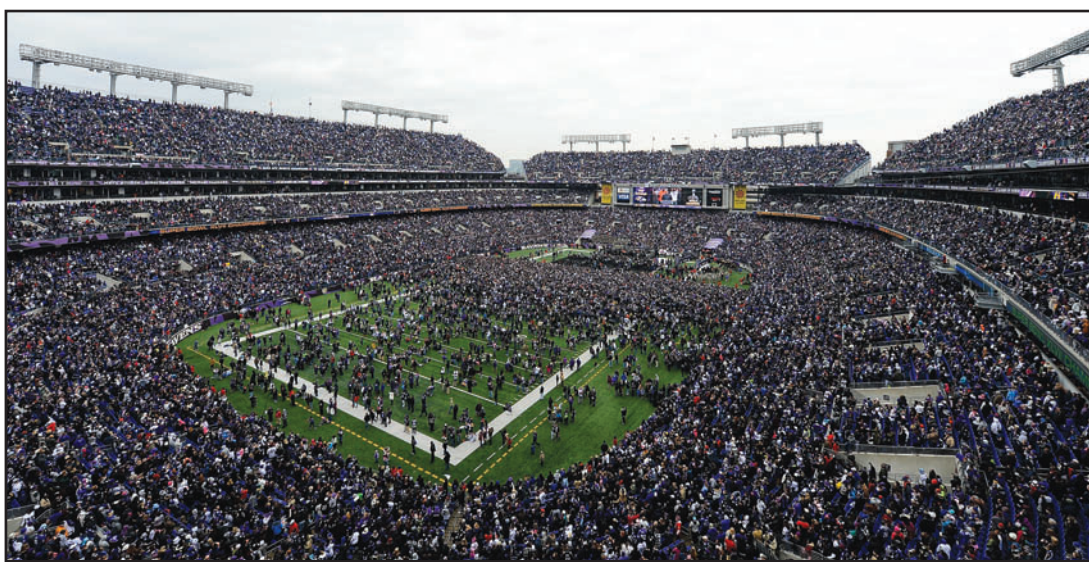
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### NFL: Baltimore celebrates ..... continues from page 16



MVP Quarterback Joe Flacco #5 of the Baltimore Ravens celebrates with his teammates.

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## Alpine skiing: Vonn out for season after heavy crash at worlds

SCHLADMING (AFP) - The World Ski Championships got off to the worst possible start on Tuesday when US star Lindsey Vonn suffered a heavy crash during the opening race that put an end to her season.

The 28-year-old media starlet, one of global sport's most recognisable and marketable female figures, landed on the side of her ski after a jump during the opening super-G race here, and flipped over before crashing into a safety gate.

The dramatic crash, which saw one of Vonn's skis cartwheeling down the slope, left her on-watching sister Laura



Kildow and eventual winner Tina Maze gasping in horror.

According to US ski team doctor Kyle Wilkens, Vonn suffered a torn ACL and MCL (anterior and medial cruciate ligament) in her right knee and a lateral tibial plateau fracture.

Vonn, a two-time world champion and Olympic gold medallist who has had a stop-start season due to illness and a one-month lay-off, had received 12 minutes of on-slope medical attention before helicopter evacuation to a nearby hospital.

The four-time World Cup overall winner had been looking to recapture her super-G world title from 2009 and had been leading before her crash.

Her injury came almost exactly one year to the day before the 2014 Winter Olympics kick off in Sochi, where she would be expected to spearhead the US team.

The spotlight immediately fell on the International Ski Federation (FIS), which pushed back the start time of the super-G 13 times and by an extra final 30 minutes to 1330 GMT after the initial start had been hampered by heavy fog.

Conditions in the afternoon run were overcast, with snow



variable and fog still bunched on parts of the Planai course.

Tellingly, FIS called a halt to the race after just 36 runners, with 23 not able to compete. When 30 skiers have gone through the start hut, the results are validated, and Slovenia's Maze was handed gold.

Switzerland's Lara Gut took silver and Vonn's teammate Julia Mancuso bronze, but two favourites who raced immediately after Vonn both failed to finish in the tough conditions.

The conservative lines taken by Austrian hopeful Anna Fenniger and Germany's Maria Hoefl-Riesch in faltering light and increasingly soft snow over blind rolls saw them both ski out.

## NBA: Griffin hurt as Clippers fall to Wizards



**Jamal Crawford #11 of the Los Angeles Clippers passes against Nene #42 of the Washington Wizards**

WASHINGTON (AFP) - With NBA All-Star forward Blake Griffin sidelined by a pre-game left hamstring strain, the Los Angeles Clippers lost their third game in a row, falling 98-90 at Washington on Monday.

Griffin had started 197 consecutive games before missing the contest for the Clippers, who have been without All-Star guard Chris Paul for the past eight games as well due to a knee injury.

Martell Webster made 5-of-6 shots from 3-point range to lead the Wizards with 21 points while Brazil's Nene and Garrett Temple each scored 15

points and John Wall added 13 points and eight assists for Washington (12-35).

Emeka Okafor had 14 rebounds and Trevor Ariza added 10 points off the bench for the Wizards, who snapped a four-game losing streak.

Jamal Crawford scored 28 points and Eric Bledsoe scored 17 points and passed off nine assists for the Clippers, who still lead the Pacific division at 34-16. DeAndre Jordan contributed a career-high 22 rebounds in a losing cause.

It was the first victory for the Wizards over the Clippers since January 31, 2008.



**MINNEAPOLIS (AFP) : Nikola Pekovic #14 of the Minnesota Timberwolves goes to the basket during the game between the Minnesota Timberwolves and the Portland Trail Blazers on February 4, 2013, the Trail Blazers won 100-98.**

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## NFL: Baltimore celebrates Super Bowl champ Ravens



BALTIMORE (AFP) - The city of Baltimore welcomed their Super Bowl-winning Ravens home with a raucous party on Tuesday, with defensive star Ray Lewis taking center stage after the triumph in his final NFL game.

Thousands of fans lined the streets leading to the Ravens' stadium, where an overflow crowd were able to see Lewis do his trademark "squirrel dance" on the turf one last time. Lewis is retiring after a 17-year NFL career capped in story-book fashion with a 34-31 victory over the San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl 47 on

Sunday in New Orleans.

Quarterback Joe Flacco also received plenty cheers for his Most Valuable Player performance.

Safety Ed Reed offered Lewis a little musical accompaniment with his rendition of Eddie Money's "Two Tickets to Paradise" and the familiar chorus of the White Stripes' "Seven Nation Army" during the rally.

For most fans, however, Lewis was the main attraction. The 37-year-old has spent his entire NFL career with the Ravens and was the only player remaining from their

first Super Bowl triumph 12 years ago.

"There is nothing in the world, there is no place on this earth, that is better than Baltimore," Lewis told the adoring throng. "We believed in each other from day one, from 1996 to now.

"The only way on my last ride to pay Baltimore back for everything you did for me and all the support you gave to me, was to bring back the Lombardi Trophy to Baltimore one more time. I love you, Baltimore. Baltimore! Forever my city."

*continues on page 14*

## US Attorney says no plan to prosecute Armstrong

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US prosecutors said Tuesday they have no plans to press charges against cycling cheat Lance Armstrong, despite his confession that he owes his Tour de France victories to illegal doping.

"Obviously we've been well-aware of the statements that have been made by Mr Armstrong and other media reports," he said, referring to Armstrong's bombshell confession on chatshow legend Oprah Winfrey's broadcast last month.

"That has not changed my view at this time. Obviously we'll consider -- we'll continue to look at the situation, but that hasn't changed our view as I stand here today," Birotte said, at a news conference in Washington.

US Attorney Andre Birotte, who led a federal investigation into the disgraced rider, did not definitively rule out action, but said Armstrong's public admission had not yet changed the decision not to prosecute.

The 41-year-old Texan rider was stripped of his record seven Tour de France titles last year after the US anti-doping agency gathered compelling testimony that he had been the



ring-leader of a large-scale doping conspiracy.

He had long angrily protested his innocence, including in questioning by US federal agents investigating the same allegations, but the mask fell away last month when he confessed his guilt to Oprah in detail.

The confession threw up a number of legal questions, including whether the federal probe might be re-opened, whether he might be prosecuted for perjury and whether sponsors might sue to recover former payments and prize money.

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